

Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Initial Response Actions described in Chapter 3 of the new *USDA APHIS African Swine Fever (ASF) Response Plan: The Red Book (April 2020)*. The *ASF Response Plan* provides strategic guidance in the event ASF is detected in the United States in either domestic or feral swine. Policy guidance during an outbreak will provide information specific to the incident response which may expand on the initial response actions prescribed in the *ASF Response Plan*.

Please see the full *ASF Response Plan* for further information, located at www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep.

Authorization for Response Activities

When the criteria for a presumptive positive ASF case have been met, the APHIS Administrator or VS Deputy Administrator can authorize APHIS personnel—in conjunction with State, Tribal, and unified Incident Command personnel—to initiate certain response activities of the index case (Infected Premises or Infected Pig), including an epidemiological investigation of Contact Premises.

Upon ASF virus confirmation by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, the Secretary of Agriculture will

- ◆ take immediate steps to declare an Extraordinary Emergency;
- ◆ issue a National Movement Standstill of at least 72 hours with a detection in domestic or feral swine;
- ◆ authorize depopulation of Infected Premises in conjunction with APHIS, State, and Tribal animal health officials according to the depopulation methods approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association; and
- ◆ authorize payment for virus elimination at a uniform, flat rate, based on the size of the affected premises.

Coordinated Public Awareness Campaign

If ASF is detected, a Joint Information Center will be established to organize, integrate, and coordinate information to ensure consistent messaging across multiple jurisdictions and disciplines. APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs—the primary liaison for an ASF outbreak—and the USDA Office of Communications will invite State, local, and industry communicators to participate.

A public awareness campaign must be effectively coordinated with the creation and distribution of audience-appropriate information.

Key Communication Messages

1. We are responding quickly and decisively to eradicate the virus.
2. ASF does not affect human health and cannot be transmitted from pigs to humans.
3. ASF is not a food safety concern—properly prepared meat is safe to eat.
4. We are safeguarding animal agriculture and the food supply.
5. Protect your herd with good biosecurity practices and be vigilant in reporting signs of illness to your veterinarian, or State or Federal animal health official.

Quarantine & Movement Control

A temporary hold order, a quarantine and/or some type of stop movement will be immediately issued on a premises by State authority, or Tribal authority, upon strong suspicion of ASF on a premises. Confirmation of ASF by NVSL is *not* necessary for States, or Tribes, to implement quarantines and/or movement controls on individual premises during an investigation.

With confirmatory results, the unified Incident Command will establish zone, area, and premises designations which will be captured in the Emergency Management and Response System 2.0 (EMRS2)—the official system of record for permits and permitted movements made into, within, and out of an ASF Control Area.

Each State's animal health emergency response plan should describe implementation along with considerations for the highly-integrated swine industry. A unified understanding is necessary for effective movement control, particularly at the initial occurrence of any incident.



National Movement Standstill

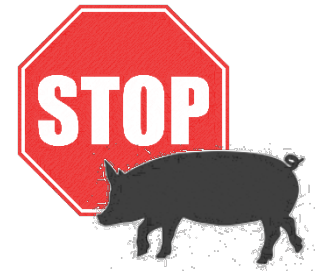
A National Movement Standstill is a complete stop in live swine movement across the United States. It is intended to allow States, Tribes, and industry to gather initial critical information for a unified approach to an ASF response, while inhibiting further virus transmission before effective disease control measures can be successfully implemented.

Upon confirmation of ASF in commercial swine or feral pigs, the USDA will issue a National Movement Standstill for at least 72 hours via Federal Register Order or other regulatory mechanism. The duration of a National Movement Standstill may vary depending on the epidemiological circumstances of the outbreak.

In the event of a movement standstill, the USDA will provide clear concise policy guidance on the implementation and provisions of, made easily accessible to all stakeholders. Specifications of issuance will at least be defined for

1. a specific geographical area or boundary (e.g., Nationwide or other);
2. a specific requirement that all live swine in transit at issuance must reach a destination;
3. a specific time indicating the duration of a standstill (e.g., 72 hours);
4. a specific list of what items are restricted from movement (e.g., live swine and germplasm); and
5. a specific list of what items are exempt from movement restrictions (e.g., negligible risk Food Safety and Inspection Service [FSIS]-inspected products).

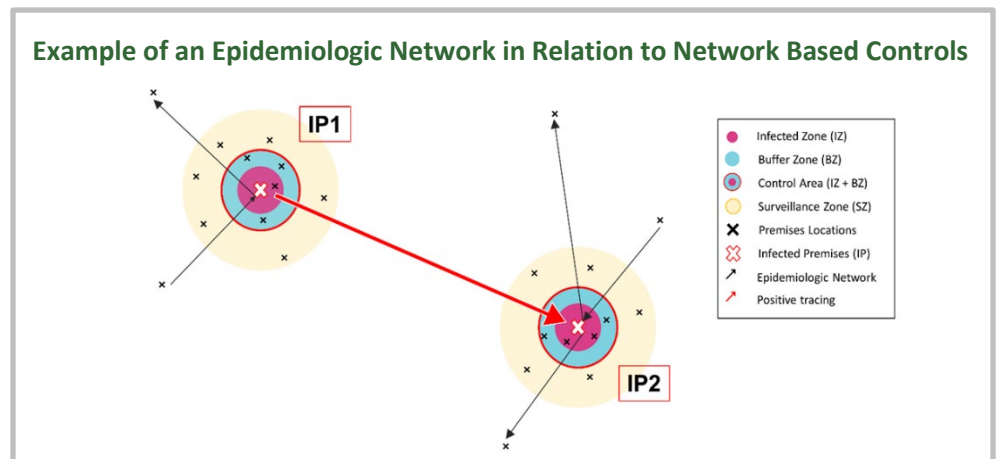
A National Movement Standstill only works if all parties involved understand the reasons and goals for a movement standstill, and have planned for it. Policy issued during an incident or outbreak will supersede these general specifications mentioned above.



Zones and Areas in Relation to Network Based Controls

In addition to traditional Control Areas which focus on local containment and spread, Network Based Controls (NBCs) will be employed to help identify additional infection and reduce transmission by applying movement controls to epidemiologically-linked Contact Premises. NBCs will target response resources to high risk epidemiologically-linked premises in an effort to rapidly detect new cases. All premises that are tracked/linked to an Infected Premises are subject to Control Area restrictions and diagnostic testing.

The figure to the right illustrates an example of an epidemiologic network where tracing from the first Infected Premises (IP1) identified an epidemiologically-linked Contact Premises outside of the initial Control Area. NBCs requiring testing were placed on that Contact Premises, which resulted in a positive detection. This additional Infected Premises (IP2) triggered a new Control Area that led to additional Contact Premises.



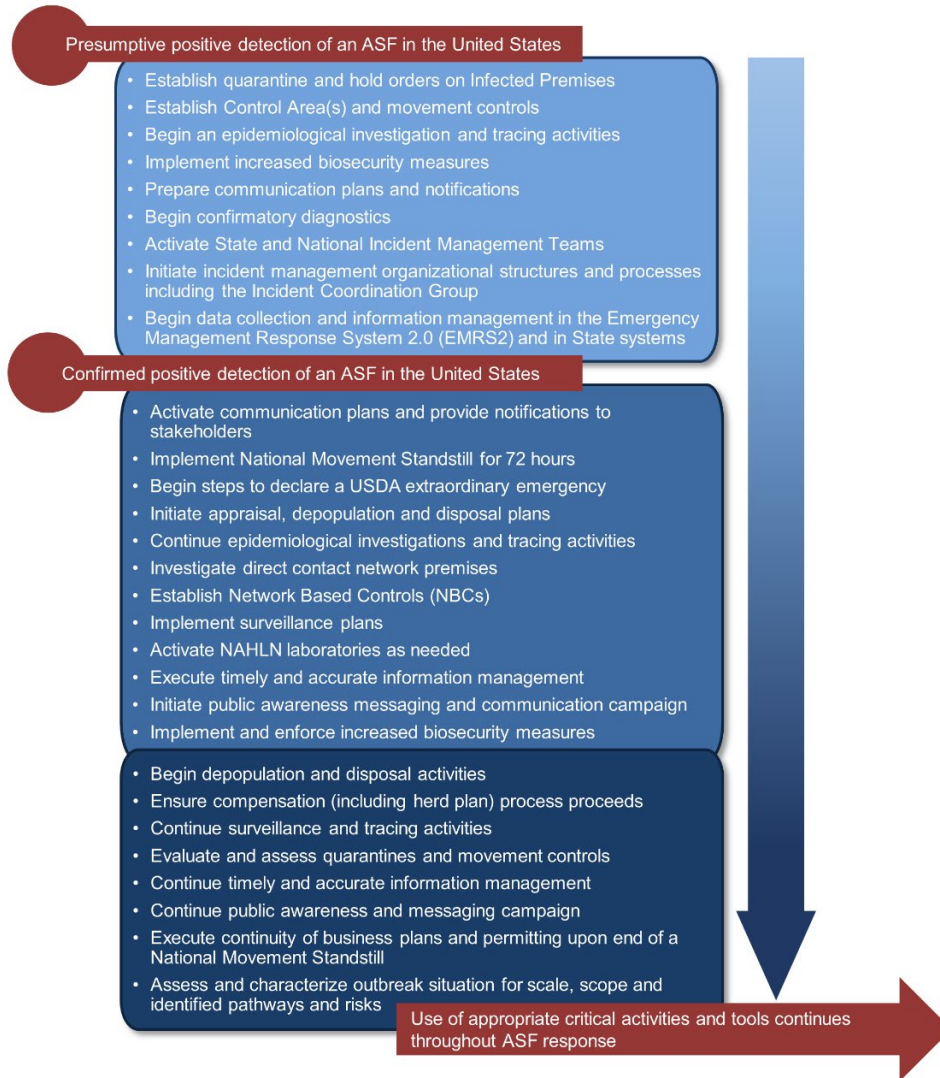
Movement Control Post Standstill

The release of a National Movement Standstill *does not* mean that all USDA and State movement restrictions have been lifted, signifying the resumption of normal movement. States will have issued initial quarantines and established Control Areas, as necessary, to contain and control disease spread. Movements into, within, and out of a Control Area will typically require a permit.

While quarantine and movement controls are highly effective at limiting the spread of disease, they also impede upon normal business operations. Varying restrictions and requirements for live swine or product movement can be expected by non-infected States; therefore, impacting non-infected operations. The implementation of continuity of business plans are essential to assist with the managed movement of non-infected premises and non-contaminated animal products. All States, infected or not, should anticipate the influx of permit request once a standstill is lifted.

Initial Critical Activities of an ASF Response

Critical activities and tools must be implemented to execute and support any response strategy. These activities and tools must support a science- and risk-based approach that protects public health, animal health, the environment, and stabilizes animal agriculture and the economy. The figure below illustrates many of the most important initial tasks and activities, but is not all-inclusive. Each response effort is different and may create unique challenges.



Overview of Key ASF Response Actions

Swine Population Infected	State – Tribal Quarantine of Infected Premises	Control Area Plus Network Based Controls	USDA Extraordinary Emergency Declaration	72 National Movement Standstill
Feral Swine Only	N/A	Control Area + Network Based Controls*	Yes	Yes
Domestic Swine Only	Yes	Control Area + Network Based Controls	Yes	Yes

* Epidemiological investigation to ensure infected feral swine are in their biological home range and have not been moved by human activity out of the Control Area. Domestic swine in Control Area are subject to movement control and surveillance activities